completion of the tenure of the Chairperson and other Members of the National Commission for Minorities, the matter regarding reconstitution of the Commission is under consideration of the Government;

(c) The National Commission for Minorities has submitted two Annual Reports for the years 1993-94 and 1994-95. The recommendations made by the Commission in these reports are being examined.

(d) The total amount provided to the National Commission for Minorities during 1996-97 is Rs. 160.00 lakhs.

Vocational Institute for Handicapped in Punjab

777. SHRI IQBAL SINGH: Will the Minister of WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) details of Centrally sponsored vocational institutes for the handicapped people in the country, State-wise, particularly in the State of Punjab;

(b) whether Government have a proposal to set up a vocational institute in the State of Punjab for handicapped people during current financial year;

(c) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor; and

(d) steps taken by Government to remove difficulties and provide financial help to handicapped people in State of Punjab?

THE MINISTER OF WELFARE (SHRI BALWANT SINGH RAMOOWALIA): (a) to (c) There is no Centrally sponsored scheme of vocational institutes for the handicapped people being implemented by the Ministry of Welfare. However, Ministry of Labour (DGE&T) has set up 17 Vocational Rehabilitation Centres for handicapped persons in 16 States/UTs including Punjab as in Statement—I (*see* below)

(d) A statement containing steps taken by the Government for the Welfare of the handicapped persons in the country including the State of Punjab is at Statement—II.

STATEMENT—I

Vocational Institutes for Handicapped in Punjab

S. No.	State	Place
1.	Andhra Pradesh	Hyderabad
2.	Assam	Guwahati
3.	Bihar	Patna
4.	Gujarat	Ahmedabad Vadodara
5.	Karnataka	Banglore
6.	Kerala	Trivandrum
7.	Madhya Pradesh	Jabalpur
8.	Maharashtra	Bombay
9.	Orissa	Bhubaneshwar
10.	Punjab	Ludhiana
11.	Rajasthan	Jaipur
12.	Tamil Nadu	Madras
13.	Tripura	Agartala
14.	Uttar Pradesh	Kanpur
15.	West Bengal	Calcutta
16.	Delhi	Delhi

STATEMENT-II

Steps taken by the Govt. of Punjab for the Welfare of the Handicapped Persons

(1) ***Assistance to Voluntary Organisations for the Disabled***

Under this scheme, assistance is provided to voluntary organisations to run rehabilitation programmes for the disabled. It is a comprehensive scheme covering different areas of rehabilitation physically, phychological, social and economic. Financial support is given to the extent of 90% of the total project cost (upto 95% for the rural areas) for recurring items like staff salary, maintenance charges, contingencies and non-recurring items like construction of building, equipment, furniture. Financial assistance is given for the projects such as vocational training centres, special schools, counselling centres, hostels, training centres for personnels, placement services etc.

(2) ***Establishment and Development of Special Schools***

The scheme envisages assistance to the NGOs to the extent of 90 for establish-

ment and upgradation of special schools in four major disabilities—orthopaedic, hearing and speech, visual and mentally retarded. Priority under the scheme is given to setting up of schools in districts where there are no special schools at present. Both recurring and non-recurring expenditue is supported by the Ministry.

(3) *Assistance to Organisations for persons with Cerebral Palsy & Mental Retardation for manpower development*

Under the scheme, assistance is given to NGOs upto the extent of 100% for running training courses for researchers in the area of Crebral Palsy and Mental Retardation.

(4) *Assistance to Organisations for Rehabilitation of Leprosy Cured Persons*

Under this scheme, assistance is given upto 90% to voluntary organisations in developing programmes for rehabilitation of leprosy cured persons.

(5) *National Institutes*

In order to effectively deal with the multi-dimensional problems of the handicapped population, the following four National Institutes have been set up. These institutes are apex level organisations in the field of training, vocational guidance, counselling, research, rehabilitation, development of suitable service modules. These Institutes also serve as premier documentation and information centres in their area of disability:—

(i) National Institute for the Visually Handicapped, Dehradun.

(ii) National Institute for the Orthopaedically Handicapped, Calcutta.

(iii) Ali Yaver Jung National Institute for the Hearing Handicapped, Bombay.

(iv) National Institute for the Menally Handicapped, Secundrabad.

In addition to these the following two Institutions have been set up primarily as service institutions for providing general services to the handicapped persons:—

(i) Institute for the Physically Handicapped, New Delhi.

(ii) National Institute of Rehabilitation, Training and Research, Olatpur, Orissa.

(6) *Employment*

(i) Section 33 of the Persons with Disabilities (Equal Opportunities, Protection of Rights & Full Participation) Act, 1995 contains a provision that the appropriate Government shall appoint in every establishment not less than 3% of persons with Disability of which 1% each shall be reserved for persons suffering from:—

(a) blindness of low vision;
(b) hearing impairment and
(c) locomotor disability or cerebral palsy in the post identified for each disability.

3% reservation in Group 'C' and 'D' for handicapped persons had already been there even before the Law came into force. Similar reservation have also been given by some State Govts. In addition, the handicapped are also given 'age concessions' in the upper age limit and relaxation in the 'medical standards' for entry into Govt. jobs.

(ii) 47 Special Employment Exchanges and 41 Special Cells in the handicapped persons have been set up exclusively to help the handicapped in getting gainful employment. Besides the Normal Employment Exchange also help the handicapped persons in finding suitable employment.

(iii) Seventeen Vocational Rehabilitation Centres have been set up to assess the reidual ability of the disabled, arrange their training and place them in employment.

(iv) Self-employment is promoted through the following:—

(a) Allotment of vending stalls, kiosks an shops by some State Govts./UTs;

(b) Loans from Nationalised Banks at concessional Rates of Interest;

(c) Preference in allotment of Public Telephone booths;

(d) Reservation in distribution of Petrol Pumps, Kerosence Depots etc.

(7) *Scheme of Assistance to disabled for purchase/fitting of Aids/Appliances*

The main objective of the scheme is to assist needy physically handicapped persons in procurring durable, sophisticated the scientifically manufactured aids and appliances that promote their physical, social and psychological rehabilitation. The scheme is implemented through Centres run by the Companies, registered under Companies Act, registered Societies, trusts or any other institutions recognised by the Ministry of Welfare. Both governmental and non-governmental agencies are thus engaged for the implementation of the scheme.

Under the scheme, aids and appliances upto value of Rs. 3600/- are distributed to the disabled persons free of cost if their monthly income is upto Rs. 1200/- and at 50% or the cost if the income is between Rs. 1201 to Rs. 2500/-.

(8) Government of India have recently enacted "The Persons with Disabilities (Equal Opportunities, Protection of Rights and Full Participation) Act, 1995". The Act provides prevention and early detection of disabilities, education, employment non-discrimination etc. for disabled persons including mentally handicapped persons.

(9) National Handicapped Finance & Development Corpn. is being set up to provide an additional channel of finance at concessional rates to enable the handicapped persons to take up self-employment projects.

Lock-out in Patriot Newspaper

778. SHRI RAM NATH KOVIND: Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) whether newspaper 'Patriot' is under lock-out;

(b) if so, the effective date of such lock-out with reasons therefor;

(c) whether such lock-out exercise in the 'Patriot' newspaper has been activised several times by management in past too;

(d) if so, the details of such lock-out in chronological order since establishment of the organisation;

(e) whether Government propose to ask existing group of newspapers of the country to take over management of 'Patriot' newspaper to resolve the crisis of repeated lock-out;

(f) if so, the details thereof; and

(g) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF LABOUR (SHRI M. ARUNACHALAM): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir, w.e.f. 14.6.1996, the newspaper 'Patriot' is under lock-out due to financial crisis.

(c) As per information available, no lock-out has been declared by the management in the last two years.

(d) In view of the above, question does not arise.

(e) No such proposal is under consideration.

(f) and (g) Does not arise in view of (e) above.

Modernising rescue services in coal mines

779. SHRI JANARDAN YADAV: Will the Minister of COAL be pleased to state:

(a) whether the rescue services in coal mines have not been modernised so far;